



***PSHITTER! A DRINKING SONG
FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 2020***

ILLINOIS THEATRE

By Henry Wishcamper

Lisa Gaye Dixon, director

Thursday-Saturday, December 3-12

WELCOME TO THIS (MOSTLY VIRTUAL) SEASON OF ILLINOIS THEATRE!



This has been a very strange—truly era-defining—time to be making theatre. The global pandemic has come home in particularly significant ways for everyone involved in live performance. How do you produce art when much of the basis of that art becomes a danger to

the very communities for and with whom you make that art? When singing, playing instruments, declaiming, and even breathing heavily carries the risk of transmitting a respiratory virus? When smiles, frowns, grimaces, and looks of surprise are covered by masks? When the numbers of people needed not only on stage but also backstage and in production shops must be limited to maintain the community's health?

For us, you seek creative new approaches, because the core, underlying need to find human connection and illumination through stories is as strong as it has ever been. And you keep a close eye on the spot where live performance meets digital media. As our future unfolds in theatre, we are increasingly aware of the value of media to help us tell those stories and to get them to you, our audiences. But we are also continuously reminded of the value of liveness, of the unique, ever-vanishing present and the ways that live theatre can place us in that present like nothing else.

We have done some industry-leading work to put the shows you're seeing this year on stage and on screen—and to do it safely. We are very fortunate to be a theatre production team in a research university, because it gives us the chance to find solutions to problems that theatres around the world are facing. We have developed a set of protocols that draw on the work of major industry organizations and on the campus and state epidemiological and public health expertise. It is remarkable what we can do when the full range of expertise in theatre—stage managers, designers, technicians, actors, directors, and dramaturgs—are in it together. In the end, those protocols not only offer us the chance to make this work, but also give direction to our peers across academic theatre.



Human stories, the stories Illinois Theatre tells, are a beacon of hope in dark and unsettled times. Whether satirical or sentimental, polemical or philosophical, reflective or action-packed, theatrical art can reveal and produce our connections to each other when we need them most.

So welcome, and thank you. We are glad you are here—even if “here” is on your computer. We look forward to being with you now and in the years to come.

—Lisa Gaye Dixon, Producer,
Department of Theatre

—Gabriel Solis, Professor and Head,
Department of Theatre

PROGRAM

**PSHITTER! A DRINKING SONG
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TIME: Now

PLACE: Here

*This production is intended for mature audiences only and includes strobe lighting, stage weaponry, violence, loud noises, partial nudity, and **profuse swearing**.*

Pshitter! A Drinking Song For the Year of Our Lord 2020 was developed, in part, with assistance from the Orchard Project (www.orchardproject.com), Ari Edelson, Artistic Director.

PSHITTER! A DRINKING SONG FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 2020

PLAYWRIGHT

Henry Wishcamper

DIRECTOR

Lisa Gaye Dixon

STAGE MANAGER

Tom Zhang

SCENIC DESIGNER

Yvonne Tessman

COSTUME DESIGNER

Melissa Hall-Reynolds

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Tanner Funk

SOUND DESIGNER

Miyka'el Hutchins

MEDIA DESIGNER

M Opsina-Lopez

PROPERTIES DESIGNER

Wendy Wu

DRAMATURG

Katayoun Salmasi

FIGHT DIRECTOR

David Sterritt*

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR/ MOVEMENT
DIRECTOR**

Genesee Spridco

VOICE AND SPEECH COACHES

Robert Anderson

Allison Moody

*Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC)

CAST

DADDY UBU

Charlie Bauer

MOMMA UBU

Emma L. Anderson

COMMENTATOR

Sarah Clement

BANQUO/MACDUFF

Nathan M. Ramsey

FOLEY ARTIST

Daniel Rivera

**QUEEN WICTORIA/LADY MACDUFF/
1ST WITCH**

Charlee Amacher

**KING VENCESLAS/LITTLE RENSKY/
1ST MURDERER/3RD WITCH**

Corey Barlow

**OLD MAN/PEASANT/JUNKHERR MATHIAS
VON KÖNIGSBERG**

Gabe Ortiz

BOUGRELAS/MACDUFF'S SON

Alex Parámo

**FOOKWOD/SHIP CAPTAIN/
PEASANT**

Latrél Crawford

**SOLDIER/MESSENGER/PEASANT/
2ND WITCH/2ND MURDERER**

Antwaun Allen

ROSS/PUPPETS ON THE HEATH

Alex George

UNDERSTUDY #1

Bree Kazinski

UNDERSTUDY #2

Josh Gaff

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

I first started working on a mash-up of *Macbeth* and *Ubu Roi* in 2005. At the time, it was principally a theatrical romp through two classic dramatic texts. It didn't have much political edge or urgency. I returned to the play after the 2016 election. Suddenly, a theatrical world that portrayed a political leader who was equal parts grotesque, absurd, and despotic felt like it explained changes happening in our body politic that I had never imagined might be possible in my lifetime. I started working on the play a few months after the peaceful transition of power that occurred in January of 2017. In the months and years since that inauguration, the political environments of our country and Walachia have become more and more similar.

It has been incredibly meaningful to me that Lisa Gaye Dixon and Illinois Theatre chose to produce this play last year. While the production last spring was unfortunately canceled as part of the initial response to our current pandemic, the final invited dress rehearsal was one of the most cathartic and joyous evenings of theatre I have experienced. In some ways, that one rehearsal/performance captured the spirit of the play and the times more perfectly than a full, traditional run.

Now, six months later, we live in a completely different world than we did when many of these actors, designers, and other theatre artists first explored the text of this play. Our lives are completely different on a personal level, a departmental level, a university level, and a national level. No one has any idea how our lives could change, how our nation could change, how the world could change in the few short weeks that the company will rehearse and record this production.

I am grateful that Lisa and Illinois Theatre have selected, again, to explore this text this fall. I had the opportunity to sit in on a Zoom reading the other day, and it was remarkable how the changes that have happened in our world over the last six months change the way the play lands, the conversations it sparks, and the connections it makes to our constantly shifting world. I have no idea what a streaming presentation of the play will look like or feel like. I hope and trust that what Lisa, the cast, the creative team, and the many artists working on this piece create will be a uniquely cathartic, joyous, and urgent call to action that will capture this absurd, grotesque, tragic, terrifying moment in history.

Be safe. Take Care. Vote.

—Henry Wishcamper

DRAMATURG'S NOTE

Henry Wishcamper's *Pshitter! A Drinking Song for the Year of Our Lord 2020* is a dramatic collage that uses William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi*. *Ubu Roi* was a parody itself of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and some parts of *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Richard III*, and *The Winter's Tale*. Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi*, or *Ubu the King*, opened and closed in Paris on December 10, 1896. A pioneering effort in avant-garde satire on power and self-indulgent leaders, it caused a riot in the theatre and a national scandal. The play was banned for years due to the way Jarry targets all manner of authoritarian and corrupt regimes. From South African apartheid to post-communist Poland and the militarism of many other countries, Jarry's satire has had a profound international impact. In its structure, it has also influenced the development of modern theatrical styles such as realism and naturalism.

Jarry once claimed that his play was "an exaggerated mirror" of the society. It appears that this exaggeration is a part of our reality today, or perhaps it is the dreadful but factual replication of what we have created as a

population. Power appears to be collapsing on itself, madness and farce are abroad in the land, and harbingers of war appear on the horizon.

Pshitter! is a grotesque journey through the history of broken and corrupt political systems with disintegrating populations, whose anger has been nurtured through mass media. Wishcamper's play is the story of Daddy Ubu's hunger for power and sovereignty. The character is tempted to commit devilish acts to satisfy his desire after three witches predict his future. Momma Ubu supports his quest and is even more ravenous than her husband. Hoping to become queen, she tempts Daddy Ubu to kill the king and remove everyone who stands in his path. Perhaps when Daddy Ubu's time is up, the road will be clear for her to sit atop the heap.

Unlike Jarry's play, which eliminates Shakespeare's witches, *Pshitter!* has supernatural, weird sisters whose prophecies, in contrast to those in *Macbeth*, may be changed or undone. The witches can decide to end the story of the Commentator as they wish: they can go against

the rules and write new scripts. In *Pshitter!*, we have a Momma Ubu, who is not only a prime seducer, but also represents a woman in pursuit of money and power. This review of savage royalty affirms the idea that justice is nothing but an illusion. Wishcamper's adaptation untangles knots from *Macbeth* and *Ubu Roi*, creating a wider diversity of consequences that reflect our current condition.

In this parody, Daddy Ubu's tool for sending messages to his political critics, opponents, and "subscribers" is a pshitter hook. When he tries to create financial reform, he finds himself alone and must go door-to-door to collect taxes. This anti-democratic leader has stolen something sacred—the people's trust. He relentlessly punishes his opponents, incessantly breaks agreements, and does it all in a heartbeat, without shame.

Ubu's greedy nature, along with that of his wife, leads him down a path to dictatorship with no respect for norms or rules, no shame for

dishonesty, and no fear of his own murderous intent. He marches increasingly toward autocracy, putting his own needs ahead of his people.

In the early moments of this "drinking song for the year of our Lord 2020," the Commentator cautions that what we are about to see has no "resemblance" to "actual, contemporary political leaders." Should we believe her? The question is for the audience member to answer, but there are other questions provoked when the Commentator later asks us what we will do about the challenges before us. We know there are difficult questions ahead. Will we have good answers? Or any answer at all?

—Katayoun Salmasi

PROFILES



Antwaun Allen (Messenger/Peasant/2nd Witch/2nd Murderer) is currently a junior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. He has performed locally at the Armory Free Theatre starring in productions such as *RUMO(U)RS in Motion* and

Emmanuel. Also, along with his acting career under the stage name Smokey Doc, Allen participates in the art form and performance of drag (lg@smokeydoc.tm).



Charlee Amacher (1st Witch/Queen Victoria/ Lady Macduff) is a senior BFA acting student. She previously performed in *Lysistrata* (Chorus Woman #1), *Because I am Your Queen* (Lucretia Borgia), and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the*

Forum (Protean) with Illinois Theatre; *Metamorphoses* (Ensemble) and *The Princess Play* (Cinderella) at the Armory Free Theatre; and has appeared on NBC's *Chicago P.D.* (Housekeeper). Amacher attended Interlochen Arts Camp and graduated high school from Interlochen Arts Academy where her credits included *A Little Princess* (Becky), *Henry V* (Canterbury/Fluellen), *Failure*; *A Love Story* (Grandfather Clock/ Ensemble), *Barefoot in Nightgown by Candlelight* (Alicia), *The Light in the Piazza* (Signora Naccarelli), and *Cardenio* (The Widow Camilla).



Emma L. Anderson (Momma Ubu) is a recent graduate of the BFA acting program at the University of Illinois. While attending the U of I, she was in the Illinois Theatre productions of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *Because I Am Your*

Queen. She directed a staged reading of her one-act play *cutman.* and devised a movement dance piece set to Fleetwood Mac's *Rumours* at the Armory Free Theatre. Since March, Emma has been in the U of I's first Virtual Senior Showcase, which was highlighted in *The Hollywood Reporter*, and a virtual new play festival with the Women's Theatre Alliance of Chicago. emmalanderson.com



Corey Barlow (King Venceslas/Little Rensky/1st Murderer/3rd Witch) is a junior BFA acting major. He most recently appeared as Emcee in Illinois Theatre's joint production of *Cabaret*. Additional past credits include Young Lucius in *Titus*

Andronicus with Illinois Theatre, Chip Tolentino in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, the Busboy in *She Loves Me*, Don Ottavio cover/ Ensemble in *Don Giovanni* with Lyric Theatre @ Illinois, and Che in Cary-Grove High School's production of *Evita*. Barlow is also a singer/ songwriter and has released an EP, titled *Reinvention*, comprised of original songs. He plans on releasing much more!



Charlie Bauer (Daddy Ubu) is currently a senior pursuing his BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. His other Krannert Center credits include *Titus Andronicus* (Bassianus), *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Reverend Peters/Station Policeman), and

Marat/Sade (Coulmier). His other stage credits include *Red* (Ken), *Amor Perdidio* (Man 2), and *I'm So Proud of You* (Finn).



Sarah Clement (Commentator) from Lindenhurst, Illinois, is a junior pursuing her BFA in acting at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This production of *Pshitter! A Drinking Song for the Year of Our Lord 2020* is her second

performance with Illinois Theatre. Clement has recently been seen as Eurydice in *Eurydice* at the Armory Free Theatre as well as a Female Chorus Member in Illinois Theatre's production of *Lysistrata* this past spring.



Latrel Crawford (Fookwod/ Ship Captain/Peasant) is currently a senior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. His Illinois Theatre credits include *Marat/Sade* by Peter Weiss, *Hit the Wall* by Ike Holter, and *August Wilson's Gem of the Ocean* as

Eli. *Pshitter!* marks his fourth production with Illinois Theatre. Past productions and projects include *Orfeo ed Euridice* (Armory Free Theatre),

Impulse 24/7 (Armory Free Theatre), and Zora Neale Hurston's one-acts (Illinois High School Theatre Festival), among others. Professional theatre credits include Chicago Jeff Award-nominated *truth and reconciliation* (Sideshow Theatre Company), *The Project(s)* by PJ Paparelli and Joshua Jaeger (American Theatre Company), and *This Beautiful City* by The Civilians (American Theatre Company).



Alex George (Ross/The Puppets on the Heath) is a sophomore pursuing a BFA in acting from the University of Illinois. They are making their debut performance with Illinois Theatre in *Pshitter! A Drinking Song for The Year of Our Lord 2020*. George

proudly hails from southeastern Kentucky, the hub of the universe. They are a founding member of the nonprofit theatre group Flashback Theatre Co. in Somerset, Kentucky. From its founding in 2015 to 2019, George earned numerous stage credits with Flashback as well as coordinating the company's community outreach and educational programming as the Let's Play! company manager. George is also a proud alumnus of Interlochen Arts Camp, having spent three summers studying theatre with the pre-professional actor training program.



Josh Gaff (Understudy) is a sophomore pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois. This is his first production at U of I after transferring from Illinois Central College (ICC). Other theatre credits at ICC include *columbinus* (Freak/Eric), *The*

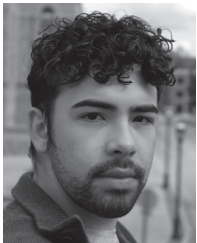
Cripple of Inishmaan (Billy), and *The Revenants* (Gary).



Bree Kazinski (Understudy) is a Wisconsin native. She is a junior at the U of I, working toward her BFA in acting. Her past performance with Illinois Theatre was *Lysistrata*, which was unfortunately canceled in March 2020 due to COVID-19. She continues to train with the

Society of Fight Directors as an Actor Combatant and has been the assistant fight choreographer for *Titus Andronicus* and firearms handler in *Hit the Wall*, both at the U of I. Kazinski has performed with many theatres in the Milwaukee area such as Milwaukee Repertory Theater, First Stage Children's Theater, and collaborations with Skylight Music Theater, to name a few.

BreeKazinski.com



Gabe Ortiz Gabriel Ortiz (Old Man/Peasant/Junkherr Mathias von Königsberg) is from Park Ridge, Illinois, and is a junior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His previous Illinois Theatre credits include *Cabaret*

(Bobby) and *Titus Andronicus* (Alarbus/Goth). Ortiz has been seen before in *Mamma Mia* as Harry Bright and Garvin in *Footloose* with Illini

Student Musicals. He also had the opportunity to travel to Boston with a devised theatre piece entitled *Quantum Voyages* under the direction of Latrelle Bright.



Alex Paramo (Bourgrelas/MacDuff's Son) is currently a junior pursuing a BFA in acting at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. He has performed locally at the Armory Free Theatre playing the role of 3rd

Chorus Member in *Emmanuel*. This will be his first production that he is involved with as an actor at Krannert Center. In his free time, he is a freelance model and makeup artist in Chicago.



Nathan M. Ramsey (Banquo/MacDuff) is in his final year of the MFA acting program at the University of Illinois. A Bronx native and United States Air Force veteran, he received his BS in exercise science from Lehman College in the Bronx. New York City training

includes The Barrow Group and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. Since COVID-19 quarantine, he's been fortunate enough to study clown on Zoom with the Head of Physical Acting Christopher Bayes at Yale School of Drama. Illinois Theatre credits include *August Wilson's Gem of the Ocean*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, and *Tame That B!#@H*. He has performed with Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, The Duplex Cabaret in NYC, New York University, and Lehman College. Ramsey has also appeared in numerous independent films and web series, the most recent of which premiered at the American Black Film Festival.



Daniel Rivera (Foley Artist) is a third-year MFA actor from Los Angeles, California. Past University of Illinois credits include *Hit the Wall* (Tano) and *Titus Andronicus* (Demetrius).



Lisa Gaye Dixon (Director) is a professor of theatre, producer for Illinois Theatre, and professional actress. She has worked professionally across the country and around the globe, beginning her career with the renowned Steppenwolf Theatre

Company of Chicago in a revival of Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Enuf*. She has had the good fortune to experience work on the stages of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the New Globe Theatre in London and at various regional theatres including The Attic Theatre, Performance Network, Lost Nation Theatre, The Kitchen Theatre, The GEVA Center, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Shakespeare, and The Goodman Theatre (where she appeared as the Ghost of Christmas Present in the 40th-anniversary production of *A Christmas Carol* and as Lucy in *The America Play*). She premiered her one-woman show, entitled *My Case Is Altered: Tales of a 21st Century Roaring Girl*, under the direction of internationally recognized choreographer and director Struan Leslie at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. Professional directing credits include *Detroit '67* (Clarence Brown), *Ladyish*, and *King Lear*. Film

credits include *The Trouble with Men and Women* (BBC/IFC), *Leading Ladies*, *USING*, and her most recent starring role in the short film *Ruby Love*. As poet, playwright, and deviser, Dixon finds interest in the intersections of humanity—where we may find universality of experience inside the specificity of identity.



Henry Wishcamper

(Playwright) is a member of the Goodman's Artistic Collective where he has directed *The Little Foxes*, *Animal Crackers*, seven seasons of *A Christmas Carol*, and others. His directing credits include Writers

Theatre, Steppenwolf, Chicago Children's Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, LCT3, the Atlantic, Katharsis Theater Company, Keen Company, Williamstown Theatre Festival, the Guthrie, and The Old Globe. His adaptation of *Animal Crackers* was produced at Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Baltimore Center Stage, and Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Tanner Funk (Lighting Designer) is a second-year MFA candidate in lighting design at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has worked as a lighting designer at companies such as Eye Knee Coordination (Salt Lake City), Old Lyric Repertory Company and The Ellen Eccles Theatre (Logan, Utah), and as the resident lighting designer at Pickleville Playhouse (Garden City, Utah). Funk has also had the opportunity to work professionally on many crews such as Tuacahn Center for the Performing Arts (Ivins, Utah) and the Hilberry Repertory Company (Detroit, Michigan). He has a BFA in lighting design from Utah State University.

Melissa Hall-Reynolds (Costume Designer) is an MFA graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, now based in Columbus, Ohio. She is pleased to return as a guest artist to continue designing this production of *Pshitter!* Most recently, she has worked at Chicago Opera Theatre as an assistant designer for *Everest* and *Aleko*. Her past design works include *Amor Perdido* (Station Theatre and Illinois Theatre), *Eurydice* (Armory Free Theatre), *Crazy for You* (Lyric Theatre @ Illinois), *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *The Syringa Tree* (Illinois Theatre), *In the Fullness Thereof* (Dance at Illinois), and *Am I Worth It?* (Royal National Theatre of London).

Miyka'el Amiyn Hutchins (Sound Designer) is a senior BFA theatre student with a focus in sound design. During his time at the University of Illinois he has found Champaign-Urbana to be somewhat of a second home alongside his original residency in Atlanta, Georgia. He continues to maneuver through the world of theatre discovering the harmonious relationship between life and sound. This exploration has proven to heighten his understanding of sound, not only in the classroom but in his exterior endeavors as well, implicating his knowledge of sound across the various sectors of sound.

Allison Moody (Voice and Speech Coach) is currently on faculty in the Department of Theatre as the visiting assistant professor of voice and speech. Previous Illinois Theatre productions include dialect direction for *August Wilson's Gem of the Ocean* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and voice/text coaching for *Titus Andronicus*, *Because I Am Your Queen*, *Marat/Sade*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and *An American Daughter*. She has worked as an actor, director, and voice/dialect coach in New York City on numerous Off-Off Broadway shows, as well as at many

LORT and SPT theatres across the Midwest, and most recently in the critically acclaimed production of *Twelve Angry Men* at Indiana Repertory Theatre. She also travels nationally and internationally to coach financial professionals in public speaking, networking, and executive impact. Moody is one of the founding members of Chicago's Brown Couch Theatre Company and is an artistic associate for Project: Theater in New York City. She is also a Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner and is a Designated Linklater Teacher Trainee. Her professional affiliations include Actors' Equity Association, Voice and Speech Trainers Association, and the Feldenkrais Guild of North America.

M Ospina-Lopez (Media Designer) is a videographer from Bogotá, Colombia, and is currently a second-year MFA candidate in media design and technology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Ospina-Lopez received their bachelor's degree as designer and their BA in electronic and media arts from the University of Los Andes. They are the resident video designer and communications designer at La Compañía Estable, a Colombian theatre and opera company. They have designed for *The Magic Flute*, *Candide*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *María de Buenos Aires*, and *Habrà que cantar en los tiempos difíciles*. With images from a production field trip through the Amazon, Ospina-Lopez designed video projections for *Florencia en el Amazonas* and performed at the Teatro Colón in Bogotá and the XXI Amazonas Opera Festival in Manaus, Brazil, as an international guest. They are permanently experimenting with different mediums and working as an activist, creating content and making art with communities and social justice organizations.

David Sterritt (Fight Choreographer) is an actor and fight choreographer originally from the Atlanta area. He is a Certified Teacher through the Society

of American Fight Directors and founded the A-Town Throw Down in 2011. He also has served as the Southeast Regional Representative for the Society of American Fight Directors. Sterritt has an MFA in acting from Wayne State University through the Hilberry Repertory Theatre. He also received his Advanced Theatre Training Certificate while training in Russia at the Moscow Art Theatre and received his BFA in performing arts from Savannah College of Art and Design. He also is a member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. Selected Atlanta fight credits include *Cardboard Piano*, *Serial Black Face*, *Slasher*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Appropriate* (Actor's Express); *Hand to God*, *Edward Foote* (Alliance); *Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged* and *Two Noble Kinsmen* (Shakespeare Tavern); *As You Like It* (Georgia Shakespeare); *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *King Hedley II* (True Colors); *Beauty and the Beast* (Lyric); and *Dracula* (Gainesville Theatre Alliance). Selected Atlanta acting credits include *The Three Musketeers*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet the Musical*, *Macbeth*, *Twelfth Night*, *Richard III*, *Henry VI Parts I-III* at the Shakespeare Tavern; *Slasher* at Actor's Express; *James and the Giant Peach* at Georgia Ensemble Theatre; *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at Fabrefaction Theatre Company; and *Barefoot in the Park* at Gypsy Theatre Co. Sterritt was also in the Michigan premier of *Detroit* by Lisa D'Amour.

Katayoun H. Salmasi (Dramaturg) is an Iranian critic, playwright, dramaturg, and director living in the United States. Before moving to the US in 2012, Salmasi taught for 11 years as a lecturer at Azad University of Tehran and Art University of Tehran in theatre history, criticism, playwriting, and dramatic literature. In addition to her teaching duties, Salmasi translated works by Edward Albee, August Strindberg, Billy Wilder, Wendy Wasserstein, and Joyce Carol Oates into dramatic works for the Iranian stage. As a director, she has staged nine of her own plays as well as works by Wasserstein

(*A Man in a Case*), Chekhov (*The Proposal*), Goethe (*Faust*), and Euripides (*Medea*). Salmasi's work as a cultural critic has appeared in many publications including *Javan*, *Afarinesh*, *Hayat e No*, *Neda*, *Aftab*, *Resalat*, *Sahne Review*, *Namayesh Review*, and the international journal *Critical Stages*. Her service to the theatre has been honored by awards for her critical work and leadership in the theatre arts. Salmasi is a former vice president of the Iran Theatre Critics Association, served five years as an executive committee member of the International Association of Theatre Critics, and managed international events for the Fadjr International Theatre Festival. For the past three years, she has informally advised student members of the Iranian Cultural Alliance at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign while leading a weekly extracurricular workshop on drama and theatre. Salmasi has also organized local cultural events related to the annual celebration of Nourouz. Over the past year, she moderated a discussion of Iranian director Jafar Panahi's *Taxi* at the Art Theatre (October 2015), and Rakhshan Banietamad's *Under the Skin of the City* (October 2018); spoke on "Traditional Theatre in Iran" in a well-received talk (April 2016) for the Center for South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (CSAMES); and directed acclaimed Persian-language productions of two Iranian dramas by Bahram Beyza'i—*Arash*, presented in the Illini Union (May 2016), *Death of Yazdgerd* in the Illinois Stock Pavilion (December 2016), and *Four Boxes* in the Temple Hoyne Buell Hall (May 2017). She is currently a second-year PhD student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She was the dramaturg of *Because I am Your Queen* in 2019, a production in the Studio Theatre at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Also, she was dramaturg of *Noises Off* directed by JW Morrisette. Currently she is working on her PhD dissertation "Restoration of 'Modern American Drama' in 'American Immigrant Drama' Influenced By American Dream, 2001-2018."

Genesee Spridco (Associate Director/Movement Director) teaches movement for the acting programs at Illinois Theatre. She received her BFA in directing and BS in theatre education from Viterbo University and her MFA in ensemble devised physical theatre from Dell'Arte International School. Past movement direction at Krannert Center includes *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* with Illinois Theatre and *The Adventures of Little Sharp-Ears* with Lyric Theatre @ Illinois. In addition to teaching, Spridco is co-artistic director of Imaginez, whose physical theatre integrates circus skills into their critically acclaimed original productions that tour throughout the Midwest and into Canada. Spridco currently serves as head of the Devised Theatre Initiative for Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival-Region III. She is a member of the Association for Theatre Movement Educators, the Theatre Communication Group, and the Network of Ensemble Theatres. She currently teaches yoga at Amara Yoga & Arts and trains toward her Alexander Technique Teacher Certification at Soma Studios.

Wendy Wu (Properties Master) is pursuing her MFA degree in properties design and management at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She worked on Illinois Theatre's spring show, *Lysistrata*, as the prop master. She was also the assistant prop master for *The Adventures of Little Sharp-Ears* for Lyric Theatre @ Illinois in 2019. Wu enjoys painting and crafts in her spare time and has been using her skills in various show projects.

Yvonne Tessman (Scenic Designer) is a graduate of the scenic design program at the University of Illinois. She earned her BA in theatre arts from Lawrence University at Appleton, Wisconsin, where she designed *Gint* and *First Night*. Her credits at the University of Illinois include scenic design for *An American Daughter* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Tessman has also designed shows locally for the Armory Free Theatre and the Station Theatre.

Tom Zhang (Stage Manager) is currently a second-year MFA student in stage management at the University of Illinois. He comes from Beijing, China. *Pshitter!* is his debut production at Illinois Theatre. He's also worked as the assistant stage manager in *The Adventures of Little Sharp-Ears*, produced by Lyric Theatre @ Illinois. Before coming to the United States, he worked as an assistant project manager in an arts and tour management company in Beijing. Zhang's past stage management credits include *Avenue Q* (Zhejiang University (ZJU) Musical Group) and *Macbeth* (Institute of World Theater and Film of Peking University). His assistant stage management credits include *Man of La Mancha* (ZJU Musical Group) and *Bad Kids* (Beijing Normal University). His dream is to work in a *Les Misérables* production during his career life.

PRODUCTION STAFF

FLOOR MANAGER

Mary Kate Baughman

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Lou Williams

Katie FitzPatrick

COVID-19 MONITOR AND ASSOCIATE FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER

Dane Brandon

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Imani McDaniel

PROPERTIES MASTER

Wendy Wu

HAIR/MAKEUP COORDINATOR

Colin Grice

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Eric Swabey-Keith

ASSISTANT SCENIC DESIGNER

Blaine Fuson

ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER

Kelsea Andrade

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Land Acknowledgement

The University of Illinois System carries out its mission in its namesake state, which includes the traditional territory of the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Piankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Mesquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Menominee, Ho-Chunk, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands continue to carry the stories of these Nations and their struggles for survival and identity.

As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for the past 150 years. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward for the next 150 years.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.

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MAKING THEATRE MAKERS SINCE 1967

We are living through history. In the midst of it, Illinois Theatre continues to be a leader in producing art that helps us know ourselves and the world we live in. We are training students today to imagine the art of tomorrow. If you'd like to help, we welcome you as a Friend of Illinois Theatre. We'll use your financial contributions to support our students through scholarships, visiting artist residencies, new work development, and production. Help Illinois Theatre make theatre that matters today, tomorrow, and beyond.

*Contributions to Friends of Illinois Theatre can be made by visiting **theatre.illinois.edu/giving**, scanning the QR code, or by check payable to UIF/Friends of Illinois Theatre and sent to: University of Illinois Foundation, PO Box 3429, Champaign, IL 61826-3429.*



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